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ABSTRACT

In February and March 1979, students, faculty, and staff at South Oklahoma City Junior College were surveyed to determine their feelings toward the change from a one-mark grading system (M for mastery of the subject) to a three-mark system (MH for mastery with honors, M for mastery, and CR for credit). Of the student sample, 53.8% (N=574) responded. Findings included the following: 58.9% of the students rated the revised system as very good to good, while 9.2% rated it as very poor; 60.8% felt it would help in transferring; 50% felt it would have no effect on getting a job; of those who enrolled for the first time in fall 1978 or spring 1979, 83.7% indicated that the grading system had no effect on their college choice; and comments about transfer of credit were basically positive. In response to the survey of faculty and staff, 43.3% responded. Adjunct faculty, classified staff, and nonteaching personnel rated the three-level system more highly than the single-grade system, while full-time faculty preferred the single-grade system. Considering the effect of the revised system on recruitment, retention, transferability, and getting a job, ratings were most positive on the effect on transferability. The survey also investigated the fact that all courses did not have a CR option and methods of performance level selection. Student and staff comments are included in the study reports. (AYC)

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INSTITUTIONAL RESEARCH, FISCAL YEAR 1979:

The Grading System

Research Monographs VIII and IX.

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South Oklahoma City Junior College
May, 1979

JC 790 622

"The Students and the Grading System"

RESEARCH MONOGRAPH VIII

Office of Planning and Development
May, 1979

At the beginning of February, 1979, a 10% stratified random sample of classes being offered during the spring semester was selected to receive a student questionnaire on the revised grading system. Stratification of the sample was based on the number of classes offered by an institute in the spring semester. The number of students enrolled in each of the selected classes after the drop and add period was identified in order to determine the total possible number of respondents. One thousand and sixty-six was the total number of students enrolled in the selected classes. This number is more than likely unrealistically high due to the fact that some students may have left the class since it was the middle of February before the questionnaire was distributed and the fact that at any class period there are always students who are absent. But using the 1,066 (20.5% of the total spring enrollment) as the base for determining the response rate, 574 questionnaires were returned, which gives a 53.8% response rate.

Table I is a copy of the questionnaire as it was given to the students. Table II contains first the list of percentage responses to each question and second a list of the comments made question by question. The data reveals that over half (58.9%) of the students rated the revised system as very good to good and only 9.2% rated it very poor. Sixty and eight-tenths percent felt the revised system will help in transferring; but, in terms of helping in getting a job, it was almost an even split with 50% saying it would have no effect and 47% saying it would have a positive effect. Thirty percent of those responding indicated this was their first semester at SOCJC, and 83.7% of those enrolled for the first time in the fall of 1978 or spring of 1979 said the grading system was not a consideration in their coming to

SOCJC. In terms of staying at SOCJC, 61% said the grading system revision had no effect and only about 6% said it had a negative effect.

The comments made about transferring were basically positive. The GPA was seen to be a big advantage, but numbers of comments still were made which indicated that there is a desire for the traditional A,B,C system. The comments made about getting a job basically were that the revised system would have either a positive effect or no effect; students seemed to feel that the degree is what is important and that grades are secondary when on the job market.

Question 5 requested students to indicate what they had heard about the system. About 44% of the comments were positive in nature; 7% indicated it is an improvement but it could be better; 21% said it is not understood or they had heard things both for and against or they just didn't know; and 28% felt it is not a good system (usually with the indication A,B,C would be better). This same question had been asked earlier of our students when "M" was the only grade, and about 36% had been positive about the system; 44% were negative; and 20% were unsure or they had heard both positive and negative comments. These results would indicate that the revised system is perceived as positive by a larger percent of students than the single grade system had been.

In looking at the effect the revised grading system has on students' coming and staying at SOCJC, the comments seem to be fairly consistent. Respondents indicated they came to school here for many reasons, with only a few citing the grading system as a reason for coming, and they indicated they stayed for many reasons, with the grading system being a positive reason for staying in about one-third of the comments.

TABLE I

STUDENT QUESTIONNAIRE

"Grading System"

A committee is looking at the effect, if any, the changing of our grading system from a single mark (M) to a three-mark system (MH, M, and CR) has had, and we would appreciate knowing your feelings.

1. *On a scale of 1 to 5 (with 1 being "very good" and 5 being "very poor"), how would you rate your feelings about the revised system? (Circle one.)*

   1 2 3 4 5

2. *What kind of effect do you feel the revised system will have on transferring to a four-year school?*

   _____*Positive Effect* _____*No Effect* _____*Negative Effect*

   COMMENT: _____

3. *What kind of effect do you feel the revised system will have on getting a job?*

   _____*Positive Effect* _____*No Effect* _____*Negative Effect*

   COMMENT: _____

4. *Do you feel a need for all courses to have a CR option?*

   _____*YES* _____*NO*

   COMMENT: _____

5. *Other students have indicated the following to me about the revised grading system:* _____

   _____

6. *How many semesters have you been at SOCJC, not including this semester?*

   _____*0 (first semester now)* _____*1* _____*2* _____*3* _____*4 or more*

   IF YOUR FIRST ENROLLMENT WAS BEFORE FALL, 1978, GO TO QUESTION 8.

7. *Was the revised three-level grading system a consideration in your coming to SOCJC?*

   _____*YES* _____*NO*

   COMMENT: _____

8. *What kind of effect has the revised grading system had on your staying at SOCJC?*

   _____*Positive Effect* _____*No Effect* _____*Negative Effect*

   COMMENT: _____

TABLE II

RESPONSES TO STUDENT SURVEY

Question	% Responding
1. General rating of feelings about the revised system:	
1 - very good	34.1
2	24.8
3	21.7
4	10.2
5 - very poor	9.2
2. Perceived effect the system will have on transferring:	
Positive	60.8
None	25.3
Negative	13.9
3. Perceived effect the system will have on getting a job:	
Positive	47.0
None	50.0
Negative	3.0
4. Is there a need for all courses to have a CR option?	
Yes	74.9
No	25.1
5. Number of semesters at SOCJC:	
0	30.1
1	27.5
2	12.6
3	12.9
4	16.9
6. Was the grading system a factor in your coming to SOCJC?	
Yes	16.3
No	83.7
7. What effect has the revised ystem had on your staying at OSCJC?	
Positive	32.9
None	61.2
Negative	5.9

Comments on Question :

1. With the new system you need to study more in depth.
2. Not transferring to 4-year college.
3. Maybe a little misunderstanding.
4. It will be easier to transfer credits.
5. They would not fully understand the system.
6. I feel grade point is very important in going on to a four-year college.
7. I don't really know much about the situation.
8. More accurately rates your work.
9. Could affect the grade point average.
10. I think the MH, M, CR, is a good system.
11. I believe it will be accepted by others quite well.
12. Students will have to develop proper study habits.
13. Then average grades.
14. But I did hear that sometimes transferring was hard.
15. It is easier to transfer what can be termed letter grades.
16. It will be better for transfer students.
17. It gives them a better idea of how well you did.
18. Grades should reflect.
19. I had no problem talking to counselors about transferring them to OU or OSU.
20. Depends on the school.
21. More acceptable.
22. Grades are not averaged.
23. This sytem is more like the regular system.
24. At least you can establish a grade point instead of MH, M, and CR.
25. I feel the grading system is more effective.
26. I don't know, I haven't transferred yet.
27. They still might not accept my pass or fail.
28. Not sure.
29. MH just doesn't give the same impression that A or 4.0 does (people won't feel that MH is as good - it might be psychological.)
30. I will be able to work on my major.
31. I can work on my major.
32. It has already had a positive effect on my counselor at OU. Their opinion seems very positive toward new system.
33. I think it will have a better effect than before because it's closer to ABC.
34. I have no idea but I imagine it should be positive.
35. This way, the students will have a grade point average to transfer.
36. They could relate MH, M, CR to ABC.
37. I like competiveness.
38. I think having MH, M, CR.
39. I really don't know much about it.
40. Most junior college credits are not transferable at four-year institutions.
41. I would prefer grading of ABCD or F.
42. MH=A, M=B, CR=C SO why the hell have it?
43. It depends on the school, some still consider M just 2.5.
44. I believe it's what the person puts into the school work, not the grades.
45. There isn't any D & F.
46. I really don't know - it's my first semester.
47. It shows whether you're above average or an average student.
48. It helps one to know where he/she stands in regards to where he/she would like to be.
49. They really don't like it.
50. Other out-of-town colleges won't know what the system is all about - they only know about the ABC concept.

51. Grade point average
52. I have never seen a school that does this.
53. All schools have their own requirements.
54. I really don't know.
55. I would prefer A,B,C,D,F.
56. Just about the same.
57. It should help classify the students as to educational value received.
58. Can transfer to point system (4.0-3.25-2.5)
59. They will not know whether you achieved your goal on the first or third test of the material.
60. Would prefer A,B,C,D,F.
61. I am more comfortable with the A,B,C,D,F system.
62. It would be very confusing.
63. I gives more of an opportunity to excel.
64. Never been to school in Oklahoma before - do not know the system (just visiting)
65. Some schools will not accept just a "M"
66. ABC would be more effective on transcripts.
67. Different systems of grading probably won't be compared.
68. Other school still dislike system.
69. It would be easier to arrive at a true grade system arrangement.
70. If accepted by a four-year program.
71. It would be easier to classify students'academic achievements.
72. Positive to no effect for local schools - negative effect on out of town state schools.
73. It's a hassle to have grade changed to the ABC system.
74. It's all up to the four-year colleges.
75. I hope this system will be accepted in the 4-year schools. But there are other ways of getting an A without the 4.0.
76. The system can go to hell.
77. I feel that the revised grading system is little more than a cop-out.
78. I feel that most schools will not be able to tell much about your ability.
79. Should increase grading caliber.
80. I'm not sure.
81. The grade point average is better.
82. Better because it's easier to tell how well the student did in course rather than just having "M".
83. 3-mark system is more like the 4-year schools.
84. Providing the schools accept your grades or credits.
85. Due to lack of understanding by other schools.
86. It might give me a good grade point.
87. I have only been here since they've been using the 3-mark system so I'm undecided on how to rate it but I have seen negative effects to the system.
88. It lets you know where you stand.
89. Tells more information about the student, achievement.
90. Don't understand.
100. Lets the student know what grade they can handle best.
101. I think every little bit helps.
102. Sometimes the grading system seems a little too easy.
103. If what has been said to us, about other schools accepting our credits is correct...
104. Good school system - good method of instruction.
105. If any.
106. The (M-NM) system doesn't allow the real grades to transfer.

107. Accepting all your grades.
108. Hopefully, a good effect.
109. Even though I don't go for the system - 4-year institutions do.
110. Be equated more easily to more traditional grading scales.
111. I feel that it would be a good mark on a transfer paper.
112. It may affect some classes.
113. Having to do all "A" work to receive an "A" is kind of bad.
114. Except for the giving of 10 points, I believe the grades should be set on achievement.
115. I transferred here.
116. Other schools can gain a better idea of your exact capabilities.
117. More clearly defined grades.
118. I am not really sure.
119. Four-year schools would likely accept one's enrollment based on "MH-M".
120. If any
121. Accurate information.
122. Their grading system may be run differently.
123. The ABC grading system is not always fair.
124. Many colleges don't care for the system - I think in time they will.
125. I have heard that it has no effect, but I hope otherwise.
126. OCU & CSU recognizes credit only with reestablishment of grade point required.
127. They follow the ABC system, it reminds me of grade school.
128. I don't know.
129. Shows a better breakdown on the grades.
130. They (MH M CR) can be substituted for ABC's.
131. I don't know.
132. Four schools grade on this varied types of system.
133. GPA should be higher under new system.
134. What kind of effect does MH have as compared to A
135. Gives a better indication of level achieved.
136. May be easier to evaluate you on the ABC scale.
137. Most schools are based on the 4-point system and by this school's system there isn't a good way to compare.
138. I hope it will - positive effect.
139. We need some way of measuring the GPA.
140. Why should you change? A or MH - what's the difference.
141. Because I don't think they will accept it unless it's an ABC system - they will only give you credit for certain courses no matter what your grade is.
142. I don't think that it will make a difference transferring with a MH or M.
143. The objectives need to be reevaluated between MH - M.
144. If there is one, it will be negative.
145. I don't really know.
146. With MH, they know you did well.
147. I feel most four-year institutions would like to know more about the student than this system could provide.
148. Because a student knows exaclty what he/she has to do to reach his/her objectives.
149. I have no idea.
150. It enables me to familiarize my needs for a two-year college.
151. It would be much better if we had the regular ABCDF grading system.
152. It teaches the students to relax.

153. I feel that an "M" would look more promising to enter a university.
154. The three-mark system would be accepted as ABCD grade.
155. It is real good.
156. It has taught me how to study.
157. If it were not for the 3-mark system, I would not be able to attend this school.
158. I feel it would be the same as before.
159. I think that this system could be transferred better as ABC at least.
160. It would be easier to transfer.
161. It would make transferring alot easier.
162. It's much more positive for the individual.
163. ABC would be better, why do we have to be so damn different.
164. I personally like the old system.
165. You are able to show that you can excel in your major with MH.
166. M is very impressive, MH even more so.
167. I don't like the idea of transferring with a C when my grades are 85 or better.
168. It would still be a problem. It would be nice to have your grades averaged.
169. Hard to translate.
170. Only because of the conversion factor.
171. I don't know how to calculate on a GPA.
172. For those who transfer it's great.
173. The old system made it difficult to transfer.
174. Students need to get confidence before competition.
175. At last it is transferable as a grade letter.
176. Only because MH is equivalent to an A.
177. A better approximation of grades.
178. A better equivalence.
179. I hope it would but I have no idea.
180. Because the grade point will transfer.
181. Only in credits that count for your major.
182. At OU the grades acquired here are not taken into account for overall GPA - you just receive the credits.
183. This has an effect on the employer by making him think that you are probably well educated.
184. I don't know.
185. Because students do not know what grades they are receiving.
186. Four-year schools still scuff at anything other than ABCDF.
187. I think we should go to the 4-point system - it appears it is nationally accepted already.
188. Clarify is needed on the point system.
189. Human Beings adapt.
190. Slower learning.
191. Students will know what academic level he/she are at.
192. Not as much stress is made on the students.
193. Possible negative effect.
194. Will be helpful.
195. M didn't mean much, MH does.
196. The new system will show how well the student does on transcript.
197. Some colleges may need clarification on what equals in grade point.
198. I don't know.
199. Since other schools incorporate the "A" grading system they only want to accept that.

200. You either master or you don't.
201. I came here because of the special teaching and grading.
202. I would like to see a different type of grading.
203. This new system could cause alot of confusion.
205. Students transferring to a 4-year school from a school with a GPA system like ours will lose out.

Comments on Question 3:

1. Because the kind of job I want - probably won't have a system.
2. The revised system is fair and seems to make you want to learn more.
3. I feel it will less complicate and confuse the employer.
4. Number of hours and degree are all looked at.
5. I think they will comment on it though.
6. I hope that potential employers will be able to interpret the grades.
7. Probably no effect.
8. Most people regard MH as to an S in Kindergarten.
9. Depends on what the people are looking for and how they base their decision on grades.
10. No effect unless you have to have a degree to get hired.
11. They will know you know your stuff.
12. Because the way the system is now it is hard to get a job no matter how good qualifications are.
13. Unsure
14. Don't know.
15. It's out going in a sense.
16. Helps in human relations (openness)
17. Should be good enough.
18. It will help to show if one is capable.
19. You will be able to judge your abilities.
20. At least we know what our efforts have produced.
21. Grade rating will work than one large plan.
22. M - a course is impressive, MH even more so.
23. In my major, it will have no effect.
24. Demonstration of skills mean more to an employer than grade point.
25. Better approximation of grades.
26. Especially in special medical area.
27. If employer considers scholastic ability.
28. Seems to be fair to its students.
29. Mastery with honors sounds better than just an A.
30. Not as much stress on students.
31. Most employers are going to qualify prospects by their shown abilities.
32. With more ability for understanding - separation of the more aggressive.
33. The new grading system will show how good we are on our transcripts.
34. To some employers it needs considerable explaining.
35. One's portfolio is the determining factor.
36. Pressure to go back to ABC attitude.
37. I do feel that a grading system is necessary to pursue a college education.
38. Who could figure it out.
39. Employers will have a better idea of your performance.
40. Should be no difference.
41. It will make you get a good job.
42. Anytime there's more than 2 grades the higher would be looked on as better and have more effect.

43. It should not make a difference.
44. If you have alot of MH's.
45. More experience is gained at this school.
46. Good school degree/good opportunity for job.
47. Gives the school an aura of respectability and legitimacy.
48. For some jobs high grades are necessary.
49. There are college graduates without decent jobs now.
50. Clear evidence.
51. A degree is a degree no matter how you earn it.
52. Some employers are very interested in grades.
53. An employer is interested in the performance after hiring the individual.
54. It better be positive.
55. When getting a job with an M what kind of grade does that tell us.
56. Some comparison.
57. It will show more at what your capabilities are.
58. Many companies like to see those college credits.
59. Do not know.
60. People who hire generally follow traditions, such as the 4. system.
61. I don't know.
62. Not that much it depends.
63. Not too hard.
64. No reason.
65. Should have a slight effect.
66. I don't know.
67. A degree and a quarter will buy you a cup of coffee.
68. Some employers do want a certain GPA.
69. It shows whether you are above average or an average student.
70. Gives employers a better idea of the kind of student you were or the kind of work you do.
71. MH looks good to the employer.
72. Employers won't know how this grading system compares to the 4.0 ABC system.
73. I like the ABCDF grading system better.
74. May not know how to understand.
75. I really don't know maybe it could have some effect.
76. You must go through a trial on any job.
77. More people are more familiar with ABCDF.
78. They really don't know how to take it as an A or not.
79. If you can prove you made the better grade this should also prove you can do the better job.
80. A student usually does the best he can regardless of the grading system.
81. Never been to school in Oklahoma before do not know either system.
82. Many companies - still conservative.
83. The employer will be able to determine what kind of work you do.
84. Education does not present much common sense.
85. An employer will know what the student has accomplished.
86. It has a good sound.
87. I wouldn't want to waste my time or the potential employer's time explaining the revised grading system.
88. You don't learn anything.
89. It should have the same effect as ABCDF grading system has.
90. I don't know enough about this.
91. It will show better how the course was done.

Comments on Question 4:

1. I think that everybody should at least try for mastery.
2. Some courses a person must achieve a mastery.
3. Some courses are taken for pure interest.
4. Undecided.
5. Better than nothing.
6. It is obvious that if a person doesn't reach M or MH that they will get CR.
7. Because I am working to get my degree.
8. Because you can't transfer with a CR.
9. If you go into Business, you really don't need a MH for this career.
10. Because some classes are taken for requirement and not for need.
11. Because if some people are not good in a particular class, it gives them a chance to do okay.
12. It usually is a class that makes for good knowledge.
13. Well, some students are better at one course than they are at another.
14. Because some classes you have to take.
15. Credit is a good average at most schools.
16. You can make the grade you need.
17. Because some people just want to get through classes.
18. Because some have no interest in the class but have to take it for their major.
19. It's a C and that's not bad.
20. If you don't make credit on the course it ain't worth spending time on it.
21. If particular subject is not directly related to major, CR suggests that you have accomplished the basics of said courses while giving you more time for major subjects.
22. I agree we need to meet the standards of M.
23. It depends on the effort one wants to put forth/need.
24. I'm a foreign student and I should have C or CR or more.
25. Of course not, M is more kowledgeable.
26. I should receive credit not a CR.
27. For those students that have trouble.
28. If I want to transfer, I have to get at least a CR.
29. Other schools have C and D and they still pass the students.
30. Because some of my programs required MH.
31. I personally won't be satisfied with nothing less than an M.
32. I thought they did.
33. Pupils are trying.
34. Some students may have to have M so they can only accomplish a CR grade.
35. CR is just a poor excuse for not studying.
36. If you don't really need to know alot about the subject, it shouldn't be pushed on you to learn.
37. Because I know I'm not as good in some subjects as I am in others.
38. So you know you can handle the course.
39. It actually depends on the students intent, some of the required M grades have no actual bearing on any goals.
40. In some courses there is a need for excellence and not mediocrity.
41. Some courses are self-explanatory if they are basic and academic credits are needed.
42. If this system of grading is to be kept.
43. Some students have no desire except to earn credit.

44. Some of the students really don't need the credits.
45. Some students may just want a CR.
46. In your major field, the grade objective or requirement should be higher.
47. I think credit is better than nothing.
48. On your major yes, but not on immaterial things.
49. Electives.
50. I think that everybody should work for a mastery.
51. Some are good in one subject, some are not.
52. Some people don't want to hassle with grades.
53. Some courses are taken just for knowledge and not for transfer.
54. For those who are not going for a degree it is better.
55. If not in your major, why do you have to have an "M."
56. Some courses for some students only require CR.
57. For those who are taking classes for fun (retirees and etc.)
58. Not clear.
59. Every student has the option without the contracts.
60. It at least gives the students something to show.
61. Some students need that little push.
62. All students learn at different speeds.
63. Not necessarily.
64. Some people may only be taking classes for pleasure.
65. Some students may not have what it takes to receive M, MH.
66. It is for those who wish not to work so hard on certain courses.
67. Courses with M standards are required in degrees (tech) i.e. electronics.
68. I think it is better to be specific.
69. Courses that are not a student's major should have credit options.
70. The requirements should all be MH.
71. You should get credit where credit is due.
72. I feel it is too easy to make a CR.
73. Not necessary.
74. For prerequisite purposes.
75. If we must have ABC please make CR part of it.
76. I don't know.
77. Very helpful for those who want to excel.
78. Some of required courses are very uninteresting.
79. Allied Health should have mastery minimum.
80. The required subjects should not have a CR so the students will work harder for M and MH.
81. Because C is supposed to be an average grade.
82. Nursing should not be a CR course.
83. Classes should be passed with higher than CR.
84. That is just passing.
85. Some teachers and students just don't get along such as Sue Burkhart which makes the class very uncomfortable. Should have more than one teacher for each course.
86. Advanced courses should require M to keep standard of students high.

Comments on Question 5:

1. Agreement on changing the system.
2. MH system prevents them from transferring to another out of town/state college losing their credits this far at SOCJC.
3. Most think it is stupid. It is still like the old system the only difference would be made by changing to a point system.

4. Different in different classes.
5. Do not care much for it undefined requirements in some courses.
6. That the system is not as good as the previously used one.
7. It's too much administrative work, the 4-year schools don't have it - who needs it? It adds cost.
8. Inconsistencies in applying standards among teachers.
9. Grading system is not standard among instructors.
10. It's a crock.
11. They think that it's okay.
12. Too much extra work needed for MH. Should be based on grade not extra work.
13. Nothing.
14. Good.
15. More of a self-pace program.
16. It is a better system than the M - CR rating.
17. Approval.
18. Positive effect.
19. That if you are going to have a CR, M, MH, why not just ABC.
20. Have not heard any comment.
21. Dislike.
22. MH promotes more competition.
23. It is a good system, feel grade should be averaged.
24. Have a stronger goal to try to get a MH.
25. The new system is an improvement but still lacking in transferability.
26. Very little.
27. They hope that it will help them to be accepted in other colleges and universities.
28. They want a standard ABC system.
29. They hate it.
30. They do not like it.
31. Those transferring to the university level feel grade point system to be more advantageous.
32. Feel the same as I.
33. Most students I have talked to like the new system.
34. It's neat and different.
35. It is a slight improvement on the old system as it gives one a little better goal, but most feel the need for further improvement.
36. When the instructor works on grades, they work some of them by average and some of theirs by individual tests 80% per mark.
37. This way they have 3 chances at making a satisfactory grade.
38. I don't understand how our grades transfer.
39. Both good and bad.
40. I don't know anyone who dislikes it.
41. They are pleased with it.
42. Positive reactions.
43. Mostly they feel comfortable with the revision and that the grading system is to their advantage.
44. Very mixed reaction.
45. Positive reaction.
46. They said, for transferring to a 4-year school, it is more effective than just one grade - like "M" they would at least know what kind of student they are.
47. Why should you have a different grading system than OU, that's the school that most transferring students will try to attend.
48. Some like it, a little competition, some don't like competition.

49. I hear alot of indecision on the subject lots of pro's and con's.
50. Good.
51. No one has ever discussed this with me.
52. They seem to like it better than the old way.
53. It's okay if there's a CR option.
54. They like it, it gives them a fair chance to work for the grade they think they are capable of.
55. Gives the student a good transfer transcript.
56. Most like it.
57. Should use the standard punitive grade system.
58. Complaints that the courses should carry a CR in addition to a MH, M
59. They would like to see their average grade.
60. They think it is a much better grade.
61. It's better because they can choose whatever grade they want to achieve.
62. Since it has changed, I haven't heard much talk.
63. Good points.
64. Nothing has been said to me.
65. It's better but harder, than before.
66. They like it.
67. Some would like the ABCD system because of the averaging of grades.
68. Most students feel the way I do especially about transferring.
69. Very pleased with the system.
70. They like it.
71. Good system.
72. It closely resembles the grading system of the other schools.
73. Some pro's - some con's.
74. They like it in most ways.
75. These are my feelings alone.
76. It will help in transferring grades to another college.
77. It is very good.
78. I like it in most ways.
79. It depends upon your major.
80. Some like some don't.
81. It's better than the last system.
82. It's good and it doesn't discourage you.
83. They feel that it's better.
84. Most have no opinion about the matter.
85. They like it.
86. Some like it - some don't.
87. Makes it very easy to reach your goal.
88. Do not understand it for transferring
89. They think it is effective.
90. It makes transferring easier.
91. It seems to be a great improvement.
92. They prefer the standard grading policy.
93. They dislike the new system.
94. I don't know.
95. The new grading system will enable the four-year institutions to assign a letter grade.
96. I have not really had a chance to discuss it with anyone I myself am too busy trying to make an MH.
97. Most wish the grades were averaged but I don't.
98. Now I don't feel comfortable in class.

99. Grades should be averaged.
100. It is well liked.
101. They don't understand it.
102. Glad to see it.
103. Most students would prefer a grade point system.
104. It really is not fair.
105. Better than it used to be.
106. They did not like it.
107. It's just like the ABC grading system.
108. That some 4-year schools won't accept it.
109. It doesn't seem fair.
110. It isn't too good.
111. They don't really understand it.
112. It's more challenging than the punitive system.
113. That it is very good.
114. They generally like it.
115. They dislike it.
116. No indication.
117. It seems a little early to say.
118. It should be easier to transfer now.
119. Very good.
120. They like it very much.
121. MH is very difficult to get.
122. Some really like the MH option.
123. Some dislike it very much.
124. Easy to work with - little pressure.
125. They like it.
126. Better than the last system.
127. You don't know where you stand.
128. Great.
129. Transferring credit to other schools will be easier.
130. A grade point system would be better.
131. They like choosing for a certain level.
132. It has worked out better for them.
133. It has improved a great deal.
134. Most other students feel that the change is good.
135. Most like it.
136. Most like it better.
137. Wasn't sure what grade point it was.
138. I haven't heard any positive reactions to the new grading system.
139. More unnecessary work for the MH grade.
140. They like it.
141. Too easy.
142. Seemed to like it better than the preceding one.
143. What does the new system prove.
144. Complaints that employers will think it's from a mailroom college like Lasalle Institute.
145. They like the new system alot.
146. They like the new system much better.
147. It's great.
148. Many people feel that it is harder to achieve.
149. Don't want any changes.
150. Afraid that they will have trouble transferring.
151. There are too many reports you have to write.

152. Everyone I know likes it.
153. I haven't heard any comments.
154. They like the system.
155. They hope it will help them to be able to transfer to another institution, but are dubious.
156. They do like it.
157. That it could be better.
158. They love it - it lets them be themselves.
159. They like it.
160. They like it.
161. They don't like it because when you transfer to a university the workload will be different.
162. Positive.
163. That they don't like it very well.
164. They are very much in favor.
165. They find it very confusing.
166. They really like it.
167. They approve of the change.
168. The old system was alot better.
169. Different opinions.
170. They seem to like it better than the ABC method.
171. It's ok, but it's a pain getting it changed over to an ABC grade.
172. You know what you need to graduate.
173. All classes should offer the same objectives.
174. One can choose the grade he/she wants.
175. They didn't like it.
176. They don't think it's fair.
177. That it's a fair grading system.
178. A definite improvement.
179. They think it's totally screwy.
180. Some four-year schools won't accept the grades.

Comments on Question 7:

1. It depends on my situation
2. I just wanted to further my education.
3. If old grading system.
4. Want to receive both credit and knowledge.
5. I did not know the system until I attended the school.
6. That's one of the reasons I came here.
7. It has the courses I need.
8. Getting an education was the primary reason.
9. I came here because of the cost.
10. I live close to this school.
11. I didn't even know about it until the first night of class.
12. The grading system now doesn't appeal to me but it's too late.
13. I would have rather attended Oscar Rose.
14. It gave me the chance to adjust to going to college after 15 years of being at home.
15. In the nursing program.
16. It was the only school that offered the classes I needed.
17. I don't like the school - will be transferring to Oscar Rose next semester.

18. I came because I was closer to SOCJC.
19. I didn't know it was going to change.
20. The reason I picked SOCJC was the non-punitive grading system.
21. I didn't want to drive all the way to CSU in the snow.
22. I didn't know until after I started going here.
23. It's still hard to pass with a CR.
24. It did not affect my judgment for a college.
25. I came for the course length that will work out for my job.
26. I had first attended here just to take a few courses.
27. All I knew was M.
28. I came because I live near here.
29. I came here because I thought it was a great system.
30. I just came blindly.
31. I didn't know anything about the grading system.
32. It was here when I came.
33. Planned to attend anyway.
34. My major requires only an M.
35. I talked to a counselor before enrolling.
36. For transfer credits to OU.
37. Almost a reason not to.
38. Also the open classrooms was a consideration.
39. Have a scholarship.
40. Travel time factor.
41. I came here for me and no one else.

Comments on Question 8:

1. I worked hard to get a 4.- and feel I deserve the grade I have worked for.
2. You worry alot about your grades.
3. I would have stayed anyway.
4. It has not been a deciding factor.
5. I either make a 70 or fail.
6. OU will transfer the credits.
7. I plan to do as well as I can regardless of the grading system.
8. I am more content than I was in the old grading system.
9. It still won't transfer any better than the old system.
10. A change could only be for the better.
11. I would have stayed anyway.
12. I was going to transfer to Oscar Rose
13. I stayed to finish my Associates Degree.
14. This is my first semester.
15. I am not enrolled for advancement purposes.
16. It seems like the students are competing with each other.
17. I would continue here anyway.
18. It seems to give you a different goal to work for.
19. It makes me want to do my best.
20. It lets you have a second chance.
21. I thoroughly like having the option of making a better grade if you are willing to do extra work.
22. I do believe that it is a much better system.
23. I like the atmosphere.
24. I need the education.

25. I always try harder to get a MH grade.
26. I came here for the mastery program.
27. I plan on getting an Associates Degree here anyway.
28. I feel more at ease knowing there is still a chance to make a decent grade.
29. Finishing up my Associates anyway.
30. No effect yet.
31. I feel I try a little harder with this system.
32. I really dislike the M system and wasn't going to stay if it did.
33. I would prefer the old ABC grading system.
34. I feel a stronger drive to achieve.
35. I don't like the revised system.
36. I really like the grading system. I found it hard to force myself into the academic world again but thanks to SOCJC I am obtaining my goal.
37. The location and money sure helped me decide.
38. I am attending because I have a vocal music scholarship.
39. I like the grading system.
40. I always aim for M and get it.
41. It seems to me that you might as well go the the ABC system you've tried everything else and it doesn't work.
42. I am pleased with the different marks one can get.
43. Please get in step with the rest of the state.
44. It has given me more incentive to do better with the MH option.
45. OU recommended my taking more classes here than at their Norman campus.
46. Made me strive for better grades.
47. It will help me take my course.
48. I like the grading system here.
49. It seems to me like a great grading system.
50. Work harder.
51. SOCJC is convenient and what I need right now.
52. I know my objectives.
53. The school's positive attitude is better than the grading system.
54. I was going to stay anyway.
55. I don't feel like competing with my fellow students.
56. I'd be here even if there were no grading system at all.
57. I don't like it because of the grading system when it comes to transferring.

FACULTY AND STAFF EVALUATION OF THE REVISED GRADING SYSTEM

RESEARCH MONOGRAPH IX

Office of Planning and Development
May, 1979

At the end of February and the beginning of March, 1979, all the college faculty and staff were asked to respond to a questionnaire about the revised grading system. A copy of the questionnaire can be found in Table I. Each person responding to the questionnaire was first asked to indicate what area he/she is in, i.e., professional teaching, classified, etc. This information was used to arrive at response rates for each of the various job categories. A total response rate to the questionnaire was 43.3%, but the response rates of each of the subgroups ranged from a high of 75.3% for the full-time faculty to a low of 26.7% for the classified staff. The nonteaching professionals had a response rate of 52.3%, while the adjunct faculty's response rate was 32.3%.

Tables II, III, and IV contain the responses made by each of the four groups to the questionnaire. Table II shows that of the four groups three rated the revised system as better than the old single-level system, with the full-time faculty being just the reversed. When considering the effect the revised system has on recruitment, retention, transferability, and getting a job, the average rating was most positive on the effect it has on transferability, with the second most positive rating being the system's effect on getting a job. The system's effect on recruitment and retention is about equal in rating but retention fares a little better than recruitment. All four of the areas have a rating between 2.5 and 3.0 which makes the ratings just a little to the positive side of the neutral position of 3.0.

Comments made after the first question can be found in Table II. The basic feeling of the classified employees is that the revised system is causing

confusion and competition among students. The nonteaching professionals expressed similar concerns, with most citing some form of confusion brought on by the change as a big problem. The adjunct faculty appeared to like the revision, but a few were still questioning its transferability and the fact that an A-F system would be better. The full-time faculty felt rather negative with much concern for the confusion it has created and the feeling that the change defeats our philosophical base; yet on the other hand, many cited the need for ABC grades and that they felt this can be done without compromising our philosophic base.

Table III analyzes the faculty's and staff's feelings about the CR option. Over 90% of all four groups felt that not having a CR option in all courses does not cause a large number of problems although written comments to the contrary can be found in Table III.

Table IV contains the responses of the faculty, both part time and full time, to the question of how they develop student performance levels and how they would evaluate their system. The vast majority allow the student to select the level he is to work for after having the work required in each level described. Basically, the student self-selection process was seen to be effective by the adjunct faculty, but the full-time faculty appeared to have a little more doubt about the effectiveness of this student self-selection process.

TABLE I

FACULTY AND STAFF QUESTIONNAIRE

"Grading System"

A committee is beginning to develop some base-line data for the evaluation of the three-level grading system. We would appreciate knowing your feelings.

Please indicate the category you are in:

____Professional/Teaching ____Adjunct/Teaching

____Professional/Nonteaching ____Classified

1. On a scale of 1 to 5 (with 1 being "very good" - 3 being "no opinion" - 5 being "very poor"), how would you rate the following? (Circle the number.)

a. The revised 3-level system (MH, M, CR)	1	2	3	4	5
b. The single-level system (M)	1	2	3	4	5
c. The revised system's effect on recruitment	1	2	3	4	5
d. The revised system's effect on retention	1	2	3	4	5
e. The revised system's effect on student transferability	1	2	3	4	5
f. The revised system's effect on students getting jobs	1	2	3	4	5

COMMENTS: _____

_____

_____

2. Have you experienced or heard of any difficulty caused by the fact that all courses do not have a CR option?

____YES ____NO

If yes, what? _____

_____

_____

3. If you are involved in instruction, what process are you using to allow students to select a performance level of CR, M, and MH?

_____

_____

Is it effective? ____YES ____NO

COMMENT: _____

_____

TABLE II

	Adjunct Teaching	Classified	Nonteaching Professional	Teaching Professional
I. Rate the following concepts				
(a) Revised 3-level system	2.55	2.42	2.68	3.07
(b) Single level system	3.40	2.75	2.82	2.49
(c) Revised system's effect on:				
recruitment	2.78	2.88	3.05	2.97
retention	2.63	2.91	2.82	2.94
transferability	2.63	2.53	2.68	2.61
getting jobs	2.80	2.53	2.72	2.89

COMMENTS:

A. Classified:

1. I feel that it is unfair to switch over to a different grading system with a grade point average and not include grades you received before the new grading system went into effect.

2. Most students came to SOCJC because of the mastery system where they have no competition with the new system. They feel that it has added a burden on them of being in competition with other students.

3. Competititon is evident among students. It's being translated into ABC failure has become a part of SOCJC. A let down never experienced before.

4. The students should be asked - D. Other institutions should be polled - E. Survey the job market - F.

5. I truly feel this is a unique and special school, and I'm proud to be a part of it.

6. The current grading system of MH, M, or CR is causing competition to begin among students. Because of this we lose current students or never enroll people who would have considered this school with just the M grade. This school was started as experiment in education. The mastery grading system was adopted because it offered the student an education, without competing with other students. Because there are three levels now, students are beginning to compete with one another, to see who's better, and many students are experiencing failure here the same as they would at a regular 4-year institution. The experiment of mastery grading with no failure was working very well. What happened to it?

7. Why have three levels. In life, there is only one degree of good.

8. I feel the revised 3-level system is very confusing for students. I work with students 90% of my time, and I get nothing but confusion from the students. They don't know what level they want, and the teachers aren't consistent with the percentage level on the exams for the different levels.

9. Preferred "M" grading system.

10. Most persons I have discussed the revised system with feel ABC system would lessen the confusion if we must leave the single level system.

11. I feel that a school's grading system should be the same as other schools on that level. It appears it would be easier.

B. Non-Teaching Professional:

1. I still believe that our students, as well as other institutions, basically view MH, M, and CR as ABC. I do not know how to communicate the difference to students.

2. Both "pure M" and 3-level system better than anything else around, but badly misunderstood internally and externally.

3. Grading system affects the transfer student because traditional colleges are a generation behind. Has little effect on student seeking employment. Grading system is not understood by students or parents.

4. Questions E and F. I don't understand - don't have enough information on these questions.

5. I have no basis to compare the old with the new since I came to SOCJC after the change. In my opinion, the revised 3-level system is very good, but compared to the single, I could not say.

6. I applaud the effort to recognize outstanding students through MH or some other method. GPA is looked upon favorably by employers and institutions. The concern I have is locking minimal grade standards into programs. It creates an operational nightmare.

7. The process of trying to explain CR, M, MH within and externally seems to be a problem. The assigning of the GPA has added confusion both places.

8. I have seen more students experience feeling of failure because of too high expectations. Rewards for excellence can be handled another way. Some students have been able to get credit for a course by accepting a CR. C,E,F I have no experience in these areas as yet.

9. Why do students need to contract for grades when they get whatever they earn no matter what.

10. With only one year of implementation, it is too soon for me to develop an opinion on items C and F.

11. Hard to know effects on recruitment at this time - concern has been expressed over CR and M requirements when changing programs.

C. Adjunct Faculty:

1. I like the three-level system. I think it is great, but I don't like having to have a written criterion for each 3-levels. It leaves the instructors open for criticism and maybe a lawsuit if a student wants to push it.

2. I strongly feel the student needs to know the level of his/her performance in the classroom, and it should be reflected in his transcript.

3. I personally like the system, but have heard many adverse students' comments. They seem very concerned about transferability. Also, I have talked to students elsewhere who said the grading system was the reason they did not come here.

4. Since I'm not here all the time it is difficult for me to judge some of the areas like retention, recruitment, etc.

5. The 3-level system is preferable, in my opinion, in giving the student a grade point. Enabling him to set higher or lower goals, and providing added incentive.

6. All the classes I teach only grant S credit. I have no experience with the 3-level system.

7. The world is still geared to the ABCDF. I think it would be a benefit to each student to show the relationship of MH, M, CR on the transcript so they would not have to explain.

8. I like the concept but students who achieve a high level may not come here at all or may not stay because of the transferability problems. Grades are not usually of greatest importance in getting business job.

9. I personally prefer the new system greatly over the master only credit.

10. Since we now have the four-level system, MH, M, Cr, OW. How about a revolutionary change to a 5-level system, ABCDF.

11. I find little written into requirements for different grades where quality of work and improvement are given recognition.

12. From my students, they have problems with this grading system. All other colleges, employers, etc. understand ABCDF grades only.

13. I feel the A-F would be a better scale.

14. Most students are a bit perplexed by the change and seem to feel the concept of SOCJC was initially in an open atmosphere.

15. The 3-level system reflects the students performance more accurately both to him and to others.

16. Present system is close to what I consider ideal. As a special instructor at OU, my own grading system approached CR, M, and MH within the context of A-F. Thus, I contributed to grade inflation because of dissatisfaction with A-F. This was by fewer F's and D's - not necessarily by more A's.

17. SOCJC is considered "easy" by most employers and people not directly associated with the college - since anybody can pass. Students fail out of other institutions and come here and get a degree. This may be good, but doesn't leave the school with much of an academic reputation in the eyes of the general public.

18. What purpose does 3-level system serve, when the majority of the SOCJC students misunderstand it's function and other community people cannot relate to it.

D. Teaching - Professional:

1. MH is a transfer grade only - H does not mean an honor student only grade-wise.

2. I feel the grading system has no effect or very little effect on student's getting jobs.

3. Defeats the whole concept of mastery learning, competency-based. Let's go back to a standard A,B,C system.

4. This system (3-level) defeats the philosophy of competency-based education.

5. I have taught at SOCJC for 3 years. The MH created higher student anxiety, because the competitive students wanted an MH and felt inadequate if they did not receive it.

6. MH is being viewed now as the old M with an M grade being viewed as substandard. Let's go back to identifying exceptional students by some other means.

7. Let's go back to the M or the ABC system.

8. Sometimes I feel it would be nice to have a grade between CR and M.

9. I teach some classes with only the S grade, and there has been no difficulty there.

10. I reserve my opinion on A until tests and skills evaluation is implemented for the adjustments of the criterion.

11. Why not go to ABC, nonpunitive, since this is obviously what the MH, M, and CR are anyway.

12. A 3-level system that uses the same numerical equivalent assigned to ABC is needlessly confusing.

13. The revised system may be of help in students obtaining jobs but for retention and recruitment, the system is inconsistently applied and it is confusing to many students.

14. My positive feelings about that new grading system are that it is more flexible and responsive to the students' individual needs and goals.

15. The M was easier to administer and write materials.

16. I think the 3-level syster is the reinvention of the wheel. Students are saying it is another name for ABC and many directly refer to it as ABC rather than MH, M, and CR.

17. I like the new system.

18. It appears the effect of recruitment has been negative since we were experiencing tremendous increase in enrollment each year and now we are declining "Didn't know when we had a good thing."

19. It seems to be a middle of the road system.

20. If another letter A=MH, B=M, C=CR were used, I believe we would finally be on the right track.

21. This system is a very poor attempt to give ABC grades using the letters. To have a system that makes more sense, let's change to ABC, no grade. We can still criterion-reference with behavioral objectives, etc.

22. The world of work is punitive. An employer who bears the expense of a job poorly done will not cheerfully say "take a retest."

23. The understanding of the grading system within the institution is fair. The understanding outside the institution is very poor and will continue to be until an appreciable number of institutions use it.

24. Students do not understand the system well, thus too much class time must be devoted to explaining grades.

25. I think it's very confusing to most.

26. I think we could have competency-based on ABC's. Would be easier for students and other colleges to identify with.

27. In immediate job entry program, there is no such employable level equal to a credit or C level. Only the best will continue to be hired.

28. The confusion about the single M was dissipating; now all the classifying must be redone if it can be done with the tiered system.

29. One problem I hear from students is a lack of equivalent standards between teachers/departments, for MH.

30. I feel the 3-level system adds to confusion. If our goal is converted to standard normative grading systems, we should just conform instead of having a modification of two systems.

31. It's confusing, sounds like a mealy-mouthed way of saying A-C to them.

32. The names of our grades and their associated grade points appear to differ from the traditional letter system of ABC and for the sake of difference only.

33. I feel the 3-level grade system is good and should be maintained. I would suggest the grades be named ABC simply for recognition. Under no circumstances should we deviate from the competency-based system.

34. The three-level system to fulfill the needs of students who are achievers as well as the need of students who simply desire to pass courses.

35. The MH, N, CR is no different from ABC.

TABLE III

	Adjunct Teaching	Classified	Nonteaching Professional	Teaching Professional
II. Difficulties caused by not all courses having a CR option?				
YES	2.5	10.0	9.0	7.1
NO	97.5	90.0	91.0	92.9

COMMENTS

A. *Classified:*

1. *You are forced to master the course even if it is an elective for you.*

2. *Some teachers are rating it on each tests and not allowing make-ups or second tests. Then dropping the student's grades down from say an A or MH to a B or M for test 1. Example 100 97 79 98. This dropped grade per teacher would not allow any make-up test or second test. An average grade should have been 93% or A or MH.*

3. *Being that this a community college, people from the area are just refreshing or just interested in the subject not the grade.*

4. *I feel that it is very unfair that grades before the fall 1978 semester are considered neutral.*

B. *Non-Teaching Professional:*

1. *Students in heavy technical programs who are there for non-degree reasons think they should have CR options.*

2. *Students in our program courses have expressed the opinion that they should not be offered a CR.*

3. *Wide variety in required program GPA's, students taking courses requiring M at other schools and transferring in grades.*

C. *Adjunct - Teaching:*

1. *M and MH sometimes do not meet the particular students' needs for passing grades.*

D. Teaching - Professional:

1. I don't teach any courses without a CR option.

2. Students don't understand the rationale behind why certain classes were not given a CR option.

3. How does a student transfer in a C from MIT to a program requiring an M in that subject.

4. Students are angry that they do not have that option.

TABLE IV

III. Process used in students' selecting a performance level and its effectiveness:

SYSTEM	EFFECTIVE: Not Certain	Yes	No
A. Adjunct Faculty:			
1. Individual student - instructor forms			1
2. Whatever student achieves		1	
3. Agreement			1
4. All students enrolled must have M due to major	1		
5. Student contract	1	6	1
6. Establish standards for each level and allowing student to choose	1	6	1
7. Look at ABCD&F grades and relate to CR, M and MH	2	1	
8. No set process			1
9. Ask each one		1	
10. Not using it with the class		2	
11. Guidelines set out by Human Affairs		1	
12. Extra work required for MH explained and student chooses	1	3	
13. Student selects level based on his need or goal		2	
14. Students choose but not a contract			1
15. Student works at own pace		1	
16. CR=satisfactory; M=over & above minimum; MH=above average and extra work		1	
17. No response	3		

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SYSTEM	Not Certain	EFFECTIVE Yes	No
B. Teaching Professional:			
1. Contract with option for reevaluation		3	
2. Describe the students' options and allow him to choose		8	1
3. Additional work required for each level described	1	4	
4. No response	5		
5. Contract	3	9	9
6. Grade options		2	
7. Set performance standards and award grades on standards met		1	
8. S		1	
9. Verbal contracts		2	
10. % on written tests and projects		1	
11. All "M"		1	
12. Grade based on homework and tests		1	
13. See learning packets		2	
14. M - MH		1	
15. Must get M and criterion set for MH		1	
16. Students set level but get what they earn		4	1
17. Sign name on circulated paper			1
18. Present explanation to students - verbal and handbook		2	
19. CR not available and MH based on achievement	2		
20. Choice based on first test results		1	
21. All courses			1
22. Open to the class as a whole, the majority will be "M"		1	